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SCIENCE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1887.

NOTHING IS GAINED by maintaining profound secrecy and mysterious silence regarding the affairs of any institution that appeals to the general public for support and encouragement. This is especially true in the case of educational institutions; and, as a rule, those colleges which have frankly stated their financial condition and needs have been the first to be provided with the means of readjusting and supplying them. The more progressive of the alumni of Columbia College have for many years insisted that that college was out of touch with the community because of the unwillingness of the trustees to make known their plans and to ask for financial aid. There was unquestionably much force in this position; and it was not surprising, therefore, that when, three years ago, after a century of dignified reserve, an appeal was finally made for four million dollars to equip the university, no response was received. It is to the credit of the alumni that they persistently criticised the policy of the trustees, until now the point has been yielded by the latter. Hereafter the alumni and friends of the college will receive each year a digest of the annual reports of the president and treasurer on the state of the college. The first of these digests has just been issued, and a copy is before us. We need not refer to that portion of it which is taken from President Barnard's report, for that was commented on in *Science*, No. 244. The abstract of the treasurer's report, however, is new, and it presents many points of interest. It shows the total income last year to have been \$388,544.13, and the total expenditure \$365,582.25. The surplus was \$22,961.88. By far the major portion of the income (\$224,062.61) was derived from rents, the next largest item being students' fees (\$142,127.50). Of the amount expended, \$249,199.67 went for salaries of professors and instructors, and only \$8,744.25 was used to buy books with. The bonded debt of the college is shown to be \$330,240, and the available cash to meet it with will be, by June 30, 1888, \$239,317. It will therefore be seen, that while Columbia is heavily in debt at present, yet in two years at most the debt will be paid, and then a large annual surplus will be available for the much-needed extensions. It will be a glad day not only for Columbia, but for the cause of university education in this country, when its board of trustees has sufficient money to vote a generous sum for the purchase of books, to properly equip the graduate departments in philosophy and social science, — in which particularly the demand exceeds the supply, — and to make marked extensions of the scientific departments. We hope yet to hear that President Barnard has been able to work out these problems, and to crown his distinguished and successful administration by the creation of a university faculty of philosophy — in the German sense — which shall be absolutely distinct from the faculties of arts and mines, as at present organized. In this step lies the possibility for Columbia's becoming the metropolitan university.

BY THE SUDDEN DEATH of Rev. Edward Thring of Uppingham School, England, the cause of sound education is deprived of the services of one of its ablest and best advocates. Mr. Thring's name is as familiar on this side of the Atlantic as in Great Britain, and his 'Theory and Practice of Teaching' has had many readers in this country. Mr. Thring was born in 1821, and was just completing his sixty-sixth year when he died. For thirty-four years he has labored as a teacher, having been made head master of Uppingham School in 1853. When Mr. Thring went to Uppingham, he found a local grammar-school of an Elizabethan founda-

tion. He leaves it one of England's great public schools. Mr. Thring's cardinal principle was the necessity for giving every pupil individual care, and not treating a whole school as a mass. The faithful application of this principle was one cause of his great success as an educator. As a speaker and writer he was direct and inspiring, and his voice and pen will be greatly missed. Mr. Thring stood side by side with Mr. Quick and Mr. Fitch, as one of the three great public educators of England.

THE FORTHCOMING CROP REPORT from the Department of Agriculture will contain an interesting article from J. R. Dodge, the statistician of the department, on India in wheat-competition, that will go far toward dispelling the growing fear that competition from India would seriously affect the wheat-growers of the United States in the markets of Europe. Mr. Dodge points out the significant facts, that, while a large increase in the wheat-growing area of India is impossible, the annual home consumption of wheat is constantly increasing; and that, while it is true that with improved methods of agriculture the present acreage will become more productive, the increasing prosperity of the people will bring about a corresponding increase in wheat-consumption. Mr. Dodge thinks that much of the increase in the exportation of wheat from India which followed the opening-up of railroads into the interior was due to the shipping of the accumulated surplus that had been stored up for use in the famine years. The conclusion to be drawn from Mr. Dodge's article is, that the export for 1887, of about 42,000,000 bushels, is very near the maximum that may be expected from India.

ASPECTS OF EDUCATION.

The English Public School.

THE term 'public school' is difficult to define. In England it has a meaning different from what it has in America. The American public school is a school supported by the community, and open to all the world. When it is said that public schools are the backbone of the American system of education, it is implied that there exists all over America a number of schools affording a liberal education, either free or very inexpensive, accessible to all classes of the community alike. An English public school implies something exclusive and privileged. A public-school man is different from other men. The question as to whether a particular school is a public school or not, depends not upon its size or its efficiency, but upon its social rank. The American public schools are day schools: the English public school in the strict sense is essentially a boarding-school. Our public schools are few in number, confined to particular districts, costly, and very diverse in individual character; yet it is said that they represent more completely than any other English institution the chief peculiarities of our national life. It is the public school that forms the typical Englishman: it is the ordinary boy of the upper classes who gives his character to the public school. We have to inquire, first, what are the English public schools? second, how did they come to be what they are? third, what are their principal characteristics, and what relation do they bear to the educational system of England?

When the English Government undertook, some twenty-five years ago, to inquire into the condition of our secondary education, nine schools were singled out from the rest as pre-eminent. These were Winchester, Eton, Westminster, Charter House, Harrow, Rugby, Merchant Taylor's, St. Paul's, and Shrewsbury. Captain de Carteret Bisson, in his valuable work 'Our Schools and Colleges,' apparently disputes the right of the last three, and reckons our public schools at six. These six, between them, do not educate much more